



Oregon Public Utility Commission – COVID-19 Response

In an effort to help ensure the continued provision and availability of essential utility services and the safety of our employees, stakeholders, and the public at large, the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) has implemented various strategies during this public health crisis. We are doing what we can to help flatten the coronavirus curve of infection and ensure utility services continue to be available for all Oregonians.

Partnerships with Utilities to Continue Providing Service

The PUC is working in close partnership with our utility service providers statewide. We are coordinating communication with the Governor's Office and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to help ensure the utilities have access to the supplies and resources they need to maintain operations.

The PUC also has been proactively reviewing our regulatory requirements placed on the utilities to determine what rules and requirements related to matters other than safety and operations can be waived during this COVID-19 pandemic. The PUC will continue to partner with the utilities and evaluate what we can do to enable them to focus their efforts on ensuring their continued operation and availability of services for the residents of Oregon.

Ensuring Continued Access for Customers Without Penalty

The PUC has worked closely with the utility service providers to help ensure customers can focus on the health and well-being of their families without worrying about the disconnection of their service or late fees in the event they experience financial hardships during this health crisis.

Last week, many energy and telecommunications utilities confirmed that they will not be disconnecting service for non-payment during this pandemic. This week, the PUC approved filings submitted by the electric and natural gas utilities to provide them needed flexibility to waive late payment fees for customers during this health scare.

Emergency Response Partnerships

As part of the Oregon Emergency Response System with OEM, the PUC shares responsibility for two Emergency Support Functions (ESFs), which our team has been focused on since the system's activation earlier this month. Specifically the PUC shares responsibility for the following:

- ESF 2 – Communications with the Department of Administrative Services, where we track the state's communication infrastructure during a disaster and facilitate with local jurisdictions and other agencies for communication services.
- ESF 12 – Energy with the Oregon Department of Energy, where we track the overall status of the state's natural gas and electricity systems and facilitate with local jurisdictions and other agencies for energy services.

Helping Flatten the Coronavirus Curve

The PUC took swift action in reviewing our processes and making changes for the benefit of our employees, the stakeholders we work with regularly, and the general public who relies on the services we provide. We have implemented the following:



1. **Working Remotely** – The majority of our employees are working from off-site locations to minimize potential COVID-19 exposure. Our preparation prior to this outbreak led to a quick transition for employees to work off-site.
2. **Public Meetings Conducted Remotely** – Again, to minimize potential exposure for employees, stakeholders, and the public who participate in our public meeting process, we quickly adjusted from participation being in person, live streaming, and by phone, to everyone participating by phone only.
3. **Website Updates** – We have created a COVID-19 information page on our website to ensure the public is aware of the PUC’s changes in operations during this time, but the page also provides useful resources for the public in the event they have general COVID-19 questions.

For Additional Information

General PUC Inquiries

- Email: puc.consumer@state.or.us
- Call: 503-378-6600 or 800-522-2404

Telephone Assistance Programs (Residential Service Protection Fund)

- Call: 800-848-4442 or 503-373-7171
- TTY: 800-648-3458 or 503-378-6962
- Email: puc.rspf@state.or.us

Media Contact

- Kandi Young, Kandi.young@state.or.us, 503-551-5290

Legislative Contact

- Robin Freeman, robin.freeman@state.or.us, 971-273-8045

PUC’s Website – www.oregon.gov/puc